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JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS

U.S.: Suleymaniye raid a regrettable, unfortunate
incident - Hurriyet
Gul: Rumsfeld letter voices respect for Turkey's
military - Aksam
Gul to U.S. next week - Milliyet
U.S. troops in Iraq furious at Bush, Rumsfeld - Vatan
Chaos prevails in Iraq - Sabah
Consumers boycott U.S. goods - Hurriyet
Denktas invites Greeks to Varosha - Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS

U.S. voices regret over Suleymaniye raid - Radikal
Iraq swamp pulling Washington down - Radikal
Wexler slams Rumsfeld over Suleymaniye arrests - Yeni
Safak
A PKK member in Iraqi interim council - Zaman
Tehran admits Canadian reporter beaten to death -
Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Rumsfeld letter to Erdogan: In a letter on behalf of
President Bush to Prime Minister Erdogan, Secretary of
Defense Rumsfeld emphasized the significance of U.S.-
Turkish friendship and voiced regret about the
Suleymaniye detentions, most dailies report. However,
some papers interpret the letter as concrete evidence
that the detentions were carried out with the approval
of Washington. The Rumsfeld letter says that the
Turkish soldiers were detained for arming the Turkomen,
a clear violation of agreements between the U.S. and
Turkey. Sources close to the ruling AKP are inclined
to regard the letter as a message voicing regret over
the Suleymaniye arrests, an 'isolated incident.' All
papers agree that the letter fell outside of
conventional diplomatic practice, and stress that it
should have been signed either by the President or Vice
President.

Washington approves fact-finding commission statement:
Washington approved a statement by the joint fact-
finding commission probing the detention of Turkish
troops in Suleymaniye. The U.S. approval comes 24
hours after TGS released the Turkish version of the
statement. Papers claim that the U.S. had been upset
by the TGS decision to release the statement without
official confirmation from Washington. U.S. officials
said the delay was caused by bureaucratic formalities.

Pro-PKK figure in Iraqi governing council: Dr. Mahmud
Osman, a member of the Iraqi governing council formed
by the U.S., is closely linked to the PKK, "Aksam"
reports. The paper deems the appointment 'surprising,'
since the PKK/KADEK is in the U.S. list of terrorist
organizations. The U.S. wanted to silence criticism of
the PKK/KADEK, and to give a message that the new
administration will include representatives of all
Kurds in Iraq, "Aksam" speculates. Foreign Minister
Gul said Turkey is investigating Osman's alleged ties
with the PKK, and noted that Ankara would not recognize
a terrorist in the Iraqi administration.

Palestinian FM in Ankara: Visiting Palestinian Foreign Minister Shaath asked for Ankara's support in convincing Israel to move forward in the Middle East peace process. After meeting with Shaath on Wednesday, Foreign Minister Gul said that the reform process in Palestine was being discussed, and that Turkey would help Palestine to draft a constitution. Gul also noted that Ankara has extended an invitation for an official visit by Palestinian Prime Minister Abbas.

Denktas invites Greek Cypriots to Varosha: Turkish Cypriot leader Denktas said that if the Greek Cypriot government rejects his offer of jointly opening Varosha to tourism, the Greek Cypriots would be allowed to settle in Varosha. Denktas reportedly said the deserted town of Varosha 'cannot remain closed forever.'

Decline in consumption of U.S. goods: Papers report on a survey carried out by Roper ASW, which shows a 13 percent decline in consumption of U.S.-made goods in Turkey since 1999. Roper ASW claimed that the Iraq crisis has caused consumers worldwide to boycott American culture and consumer products.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq

"Can't we be more specific?"
Sami Kohen stated in mass appeal Milliyet (7/17):
"Ankara is suffering because of its failure to present a clearly defined policy for Northern Iraq. This issue has not been properly discussed to this point, but there is an urgent need for an open discussion and to work toward new strategies based on the facts in the region. Northern Iraq has turned into an issue that could determine the fate of Turkish-American relations. Both Turkey and the US need to fine-tune their policies on Iraq if there is a common desire to enhance bilateral ties."

"Iraq and Turkey"
Cengiz Candar commented in DB Tercuman (7/17): "Turkey has experienced a defeat in Iraq in all military, political and diplomatic senses. Turkey must completely change its approach to Iraq, particularly its 'northern Iraq mentality,' as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Otherwise, we can expect new challenges with the US, new defeats for Ankara, and more problems for the Turkoman community."

"Agreeing to disagree"
Ilnur Cevik is back from the region and observed in the English language Turkish Daily News (7/17): "The Americans have decided not to pursue the issue any further for the sake of Turkish-American ties, but the dispute is still there. Now Turkish leaders have to sit down and decide what we want to do in northern Iraq and how. This means the civilian leadership should be more involved in the decision-making process, and should not leave everything to the military."

PEARSON